62. Appointment of a Committee to suggest measures to remedy the economic and commercial depression caused by the war and the failure of crops.

Mr. M. K. Kadir Pillai (Member, Alengad taluk) proposed that a Committee of officials and non-officials should be appointed to investigate the cause of the economic and commercial depression in the country. The Committee should be composed of 21 members as follows :—the Directors of Agriculture, Industries and Civil Supplies, two of the leading ryots and merchants from each of the four divisions and one ryot and one merchant from the Devicolam Division. The recommendations of the Committee should form the basis of action by Government. The increase of revenue was no index of the prosperity of the land. Nor could the statement in the administration report that the large increase in the volume of export trade was a sign of material prosperity be accepted. For, the figures which formed the data were not correct. A close examination of the transactions of the Registration Department would reveal how properties were being pledged for getting small amounts of money which was a safe test of the real poverty of the people. The development of agriculture was, no doubt, being proceeded with. But funds for that purpose were not sufficient and more money should be placed at the disposal of the Department. Regarding the work of the Industrial Department, the same could not be said. The Director of Industries promised to develop some cottage industries, but the progress made was not much.

Dewan's reply.—Noted.

V. PUBLIC WORKS.

63. Desirability of transferring the maintenance of the village roads of each taluk from the P. W. D. to the Revenue Department.

Mr. K. Raman Pillai (Member, Mavelikara taluk) submitted that the village roads in the taluks of Karunagapalli, Kartikapalli and Mavelikara were not being maintained properly and that, if the allotted funds were transferred to the Revenue Department, more satisfactory work could be turned out to the greater advantage of the people. Formerly, the Revenue Department was attending to the maintenance of village roads and it was latterly that the P. W. D. was entrusted with the task. The Revenue Department came in closer contact with the people and knew the local requirements better. It was that department again that would be better able to secure the co-operation and support of the people in the execution of such public works of utility. As recently as in 1093, several village roads in the taluks of Mavelikara and Karunagapalli had been gravelled and made useful for cart traffic by the people through the efforts and enthusiasm of the Tahsildars concerned. Another work carried out by the people was the road from Pallikkal T. B. to Thazhava which the Dewan himself had seen. The Kulasekarapuram-Chakkuvalli road and the Pallikkal-Thazhava road up to Malimel *kadavu* which were gravelled by the people were being improved by the P. W. D. The Member requested that the work might be ordered to be finished soon, with the necessary bridges and culverts.

Dewan's reply.—The representation will receive consideration.

64. Irrigation needs of the Vilavancode taluk.

Mr. R. Narayana Pillai (Member, T. I. C., Kuzhithura) said that the complaints of the people in regard to irrigation were being made from the 12th Session of the Assembly and that as a result the report of the Chief Engineer who had been asked to investigate the whole question had been received and referred to the Dewan Peishkar of the Division for an expression of his views. It was necessary, in the Member's opinion, that, before the report was disposed of by the Peishkar, it should be referred to a Committee consisting of the Dewan Peishkar as President, the Executive Engineer and the Director of Agriculture as official members and also four ryots of the taluk as non-official members. Action should be taken on the recommendations of that Committee. The following requests were also made:—

(1) Opening of a Manure Depot at Kuzhithura.

(2) The produce taken for sale to the Thoduvetti market was first charged with the T. I. C. fees, and when the river was crossed, there was the toll also to be paid. All that caused a good deal of hardship which should be removed.

LIBRARY ARCHIVES Kerala Legislative Assembly